Which Casket twas I chose. Next, if I faile
Of the right Casket, neuer in my life
To woe a maide in way of marriage:
Lastly, if I do faile in fortune of my choise,
Immediately to leaue you, and be gone.
Por. To these iniunctions euery one doth sweare,
That comes to hazard for my worthlesse selfe.
Arr. And so haue I addrest me, fortune now
To my hearts hope: Gold, Siluer, and base Lead.
Who chooseth me, must giue and hazard all he hath.
You shall looke fairer ere I giue or hazard.
What sayes the golden Chest? ha, let me see,
Who chooseth me, shall gaine what many men desire.
What many men desire, that many may be meant
By the foole-multitude, that chuse by show:
Not learning more then the fond eye doth teach,
Which pries not to th'interiour; but like the Martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Euen in the force and rode of casualty.
I will not chuse what many men desire,
Because I will not iumpe with common spirits,
And ranke me with the barbarous multitudes.
Why then to thee thou Siluer treasure house,
Tell me once more what title thou dost beare:
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserues.
And well said too, for who shall go about
To cosen Fortune, and be honourable
Without the stampe of merit, let none presume
To weare an vndeserued dignity:
O that estates, degrees, and offices,
Were not deriu'd corruptly, and that cleare honor
Were purchac'd by the merit of the wearer,
How many then should couer, that stand bare?
How many be commanded, that command?
How much low pezantry would then be gleaned
From the true seede of honor? And how much honor,

Pickt from the chaffe and ruine of the times
To be new vernish'd? well, but to my choise,
Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserues.
I will assume desert. Giue me a key for this,
And instantly vnlocke my fortunes heere.
Por. Too long a pause for that which you finde there.
Arrag. What's heere, the portrait of a blinking Ideot,
Presenting me a sedule? I will reade it.
How much vnlike art thou to *Portia*?
How much vnlike my hopes, and my deseruings.
Who chooseth me shall haue as much as he deserues.
Did I deserue no more then a fooles head?
Is that my prize? Are my deserts no better?
Por. To offend and iudge are distinct offices,
And of opposed Natures.
Arrag. What heere? *Hee reads.*

The fire seuen times tried this:
Seuen times tried that iudgement is,
That did neuer choose amis.
Some there be that shadowes kis,
Such haue but a shadowes blis:
There be fooles alive I wis,
Siluer'd o're, and so was this.
Take what wife you will to bed,
I will euer be your head:
So be gone, you are sped.

Still more foole I shall appeere,
By the time I linger heere,
With one fooles head I came to woe,
But I go away with two.
Sweet adieu, Ile keepe my oath,
Patiently to beare my wroath.
Portia. Thus hath the candle singd'd the Moth.
O these deliberate fooles, when they do choose,

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